



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0357KY-1 for Corbin Independent Board of Education

### A. Vision (40 total points)

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Application outlines a comprehensive and coherent reform initiative that utilizes past experiences and maximizes resources to ignite a cultural shift within the region which is predicted to have long range positive impacts on the educational systems of this two county Consortium. The application proposes a consortium of four school districts which together represent over 11,400 students, K- 12. Applicant has pinpointed areas of greatest need and has provided data to support these assertions.</p> <p>Detail is provided about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Identified achievement gaps noted in state testing scores, graduation rate and college readiness rates shared.</li> <li>-Consortium suffers from a huge cycle of "under-education". A large percentage of parents have not graduated for high school themselves, and the trend is growing. Key indicators supporting need for this proposal: US Census statistics indicate: 26.4% of Whitley County residents, ages 18-24 have less than a high school diploma, McCreary County has 49.6% of this age group with less than a high school diploma. The poverty rate according to Kids Count for children 40.5% in McCreary County, 34.1% in Whitley County (national average is 16.6%). College attainment for 25 year olds is 8% in McCreary County and 11.9% in Whitley County. Free and reduced lunch eligibility shows all schools in the consortium have at least a 40 % rate of eligibility while several schools are over 72%.</li> <li>-According to statistics provided, 72% of the overall consortium population is low-income; 16% are special needs students. The applicant has established need and has targeted these subgroups for intensive interventions in this grant.</li> </ul> <p>The grant overview states "All school districts in this Consortium have shown positive academic strides to demonstrate that these school districts and communities are capable and committed to reducing achievement gaps in the school and transforming education through a learner centered approach. This over-arching goal is reflected throughout the grant proposal and serves as a guidepost. For example: "Initial funding of this proposal provides a mechanism to address "the next generation of learners through emphasizing personalized learning environments, anytime/anywhere learning, and creating a change in total education culture, going from teacher-centered too learner-centered approaches."</p> <p>Proposal also includes an extensive social and medical support services available to students and families, in each school building, through partnerships with community agencies. This will create a system that is capable of responding quickly to immediate needs that may interfere with student academic success.</p> |           |           |

|  |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The consortium framework provides a cost effective way to maximize resources and provide sustainability beyond grant implementation. Program is designed to include all students. Applicant shares a comprehensive overview of existing needs and vision to address them.</p> <p>Extensive student data collection will include cognitive academic data: academic grades and assessment performance and non-cognitive data: # of days absent, grades retained, credits earned, credits attempted, migrant students, English Learner status, homelessness, gender, age, truancy, behavior, suspensions, expulsions. The proposal indicates employing the statewide "Infinite Campus" longitudinal data system and the "Persistence to graduation Tool (PtGT)". This inclusive approach to data collections and analysis provides the opportunity to address key student issues in a comprehensive manner and establish resources that support students and families.</p> <p>Proposal included the addition of key staff to ensure successful implementation of programs and activities outlined. The grant states "the approach will conservative enough so that sustainability can be attained at the conclusion of funding. All participating LEA's will have dedicated managers/coordinators for core components". This includes personalized learning environment, college and career ready, anytime/anywhere learning. Each LEA will provide significant staff resources by reassigning and redesigning current positions to align with grant proposal goals.</p> |           |           |
| <b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Logic model outlines proposal progression in an effective way, for example: implementing materials/technology resources will produce improved attitude toward self and society through a new communication program and student access to high performing content through technology and varied resources.</p> <p>Coordinated planning within each district in the Consortium plus an overarching planning group will provide focused initiatives that meet particular partner needs and at the same time maximize global initiatives. The ability to collaborate within a district and also with all district partners to share ideas and resources has a multiplier effect that is systemic and ongoing.</p>   |           |           |
| <b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Specific project goals outlined in detail in this proposal include: Increase consortium's overall performance on statewide ESEA required assessments in reading and mathematics to meet/exceed state's targets for an average rate of 90% proficiency by 2016. Increase achievement by 2016 for all student groups to produce a 10% decrease in the percentage points in the achievement gap from the 2012 baselines. Increase college enrollment rates for all consortium students by 3% annually for each year 2012-2016.</p> <p>After reviewing data provided in the appendices, it appears these are attainable with the implementation of the proposal objectives. Cross referencing the school demographic data, 2010-2011 with the performance on summative assessments data shows success has been achieved in small increments overall and targeted subgroups have not kept pace with the overall cohort.</p> <p>A key asset is the tremendous support for this project by teachers, students, parents, administrators and community partners as evidenced in the letters of support.</p> <p>College and career readiness initiatives are discussed throughout the application. Efforts are designed to address less than adequate performance in this area currently as evidenced by "College Enrollment "data chart. Transitional courses are a primary strategy to reduce remediation rates at the post-secondary level. In other words students exit high school prepared for the rigor of initial college level courses.</p>                            |           |           |

Transition from middle to high school addressed by implementing bridge programs and expanded learning opportunities. Using programs such as EXPLORE, PLAN and ASPIRE test and norm referenced assessments will support students to stay on track for ACT benchmarks for college and career readiness. The proposal pairs these assessment strategies with authentic learning opportunities and career awareness programs.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

|  | Available | Score     |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b> <p>Track record of previous successful collaborations having a positive impact between organizations and the school districts include first implementation of Project Lead the Way, creation of first evidenced based substance abuse prevention program, establishing Family Resource Centers in the primary and elementary schools.</p> <p>Key component proposed is to establish partnerships with the Family Resource and Youth Services Center to be located in every school, K-12 to provide readily available counseling and health services to assist students and their families.</p> <p>Districts do have intervention services to address dropout rates and poor performance. Applicant provides information about effectiveness of current program through graduation and post high school education data. Current programs appear to be not comprehensive enough to address the growing drop out problem. This proposal would create improved intervention strategies to include "creating alternative educational services for small group instruction; create more flexible scheduling, and student voice in program selection."</p> <p>Over the past three years targeted assistance was provided to low achieving schools. Two schools have improved and are no longer designated as low achieving. Information shared indicates that districts are implementing the concept of putting their "best efforts/resources" in the places of greatest need and employing evidenced based initiatives such as flexible grouping of students to improve student learning.</p> |           |           |
| <b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>  | <b>5</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b> <p>Appendices include extensive financial records from each partner school district. Payroll records, district budget and salary proposals for grant funded positions provide assurance that funding is being managed appropriately.</p> <p>Applicant states promotion of the project's initiatives and transparency of progress and accomplishments will be made available through the use of multiple media platforms. Support is indicated through letters of support from media and community leaders and their participation in the Consortium steering committee.</p> <p>"All four districts are aligned by the MUNIS system, a statewide initiative provided through the Kentucky Department of Education". Districts also follow other best accounting practices by contracting with independent audit firms to monitor expenses and expenditures. Reports are filed and available for public viewing.</p>  |           |           |
| <b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |

**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

These districts have met Kentucky requirements that indicates all school included in this proposal are "in good standing", therefore not under any sanctions or penalties that would restrict goal attainment.

Applicant demonstrates that all partners are cooperating and aligned with Kentucky Dept. of Education and the US Dept. of Education initiatives and are dedicated to improving education for each student. Memorandums of Understanding between the partners are included in the appendices.

**(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)****10****10****(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

Applicant has sufficiently demonstrated that they have foundational support for this grant as evidenced by numerous letters of support from all stakeholder groups provided in the appendices.

Strength to note: the effort put forth to deeply involve all stakeholders in identifying needs, developing concepts to address issues, constructing a comprehensive and balanced plan to initiate cultural change and plans for sustainability established a strong community partnership.

Stakeholders are very supportive of this proposal as evidenced by the teacher support indicated in the teacher support petition document. 99.73% of all teachers signed the support petition. Note that is 744 of 746 teachers, two teachers did not vote due to being on medical leave. Applicant provided detail regarding how constituent feedback was gathered and incorporated which creates a more comprehensive plan.

**(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)****5****5****(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:**

Plans to regularly review and analyze data collected on school, district and state levels has been built into the school calendar. This is an innovative, comprehensive process since parents, students and key community members will be invited to serve on these committees and participate in data analysis and gap identification.

**C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)**

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>  | <b>20</b> | <b>20</b> |
| <b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>Grant application specifies plans to insure students are college and career ready. These examples demonstrate the comprehensive nature of this proposal.</p> <p>-Students will direct their own learning experiences through the process of creating a personal learning plan based on individual learning styles. They will also identify and develop personal goals linked to college and career readiness</p> <p>-Applicant intends to implement a dual pathway for students to engage in deep learning exercises in areas of academic interest. Students will take a mixture of courses linked to academic and industry standards. These provide opportunity for students to earn both college and high school credit and industry certifications. This program dimension will provide immense benefits including student motivation and vision. Also focused initiatives such as Project Lead the Way and Laying the Foundations courses provide academic programs directly tied to career and college readiness.</p> |           |           |

-Consortium will provide a student intervention system for struggling, high needs students to meet standards through accommodations.

-Consortium Districts will implement an internet based tool, "Individual Learning Plan" that provides timely formative and summative feedback to student, teacher and parents. Plan must include implementing instructional strategies that enable students to pursue rigorous course of study focused on career and college readiness.

-Existing after school programs and summer programs will focus on providing core content and advance educational programs that are evidenced-based. Accelerated student learning will enhance academic gains.

-Applicant proposes to offer innovative pathways to student success that provides for numerous options for remediation in academics, improve behavior and provide enhanced learning experiences. One strategy noted is the creation of career academies that would align courses to allow students to earn dual credit leading to an associate degree upon high school graduation.

|  |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>17</b> |
|--|-----------|-----------|

**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Grant proposes a high quality plan to insure students are able to pursue a rigorous course of study. Essential project design includes providing staff with necessary professional development resources, materials and technology to meet the individual learner needs. As indicated below, applicant demonstrates efforts to meet goals.

-To extend the impact of established high performing academies the applicant proposes to develop an online community to provide student options and access to families to high level educational services and enhancements 24/7. Highly skilled and qualified teachers are available to all students through this online community.

-To provide training and support for students and parents in using various resources for learning. Focus on academic and career advising, on-line training modules, on-site training after school, peer tutoring, parent session are examples shared.

-Addresses the need for teachers to understand and have skills to implement anywhere/anytime designed curricula. One strategy planned is to partner with International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) to develop standardized curricula.

-Through comprehensive professional development, teachers will learn how to create environments that help learners to connect with interests and aspirations, allowing them to have a voice and choice on what and how they learn and utilize an assessment learning tool. Teacher training in the use of "Project-Based Learning" will intensify student learning processes is key to the personalized learning process. Plans are shared to utilize nationally recognized professional development specialists to train teachers in Project based Learning.

Another key area addressed is increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals. Grant proposes to use balanced leadership program to support principal and administrator to employ behaviors and practices that lead to increase student achievement. The valuation of teacher, administrators and the Superintendents is based upon work of the Regional Educational Laboratories that work with Eastern Kentucky University, University of Kentucky, Kentucky Dept. of Education. This objective approach will accelerate the identification of challenges and improvement in this area.

Personalized Learning environments will employ the McClaskey and Bray leadership model to establish teacher leaders and turn-key trainers in each building.

**D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)**

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>14</b> |
| <b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>Flexible scheduling will allow students to pursue courses of interest and a personalized approach to learning based on student acquisition of knowledge rather than mastery based on "seat time". This aspect of the proposal addresses the variation of student learning styles and rate of learning. It provides a way for students to design their own schedule and pace of their educational experiences. The proposal did not share if State of Kentucky education regulations allow for this variance is scheduling.</p> <p>Applicant has proposed to address any school identified as persistently low achieving (PLA) by establishing intensive recovery services to target struggling students to insure they are career and college ready. This is an example of another component of the extensive plan laid out in the proposal.</p> <p>Flexible scheduling will allow students to pursue courses of interest and a personalized approach to learning based on student acquisition of knowledge rather than mastery based on "seat time". This aspect of the proposal addresses the variation of student learning styles and rate of learning. It provides a way for students to design their own schedule and pace of their educational experiences. The proposal did not share if State of Kentucky education regulations allow for this variance is scheduling.</p> |           |           |
| <b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <b>(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>Propose to provide training and support for students and parents in using various resources for learning. Focus on academic and career advising, on-line training modules, on-site training after school, peer tutoring, parent session are examples shared.</p> <p>Proposal notes technology will be used to create a unified framework to improve every aspect of education through interconnection of instruction on every platform and device to match student needs with specific resources. Districts also explained how they would connect human resources data, budget data etc. to instructional improvement. This appears to be a comprehensive approach.</p> <p>Parent on line resources and face to face conference opportunities prescribed in this grant create transparency for student, teacher and parent. This will encourage parents and students to reflect on progress and students accept responsibility for their learning. This could be a terrific motivating strategy as once this is tied to other demographic data as previously mentioned; an in-depth report of student success is created and can be used to adjust goals.</p>  |           |           |

**E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)**

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>The proposal includes many effective strategies to ensure the grant is implemented with continuous improvement built in.</p> <p>Objective, third party evaluators are proposed in this grant. External evaluation services will provide "unbiased capacity to monitor academic growth and career/college readiness". Plan also states working partnership with institutions of higher education to create innovative, long lasting change within the Consortium.</p> |           |           |

"Overall goal: to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals". Grant proposes to use balanced leadership program to support principal and administrator to employ behaviors and practices that lead to increase student achievement. The evaluation of teacher, administrators and the Superintendents is based upon work of the Regional Educational Laboratories that work with Eastern Kentucky University, University of Kentucky, Kentucky Dept. of Education. This objective approach will accelerate the identification of challenges and improvement in this area.

Proposal included the addition of key staff to ensure successful implementation of programs and activities outlined. The grant states "the approach will conservative enough so that sustainability can be attained at the conclusion of funding. All participating LEA's will have dedicated managers/coordinators for core components". This includes personalized learning environment, college and career ready, anytime/anywhere learning. Each LEA will provide significant staff resources by reassigning and redesigning current positions to align with grant proposal goals.

|   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|----------|----------|

**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

-School Based Decision Making Councils in each participating school, combined with representation on the Advisory Council for the Southeastern Kentucky RTTT Consortium, parent and family representation will be seen at many levels during project implementation and operation.

-Each district has established and relies on strong decision-making mechanisms through their school-based decision-making councils. Community partners are viewed as important resources by the Consortium partners. School improvement projects such as establishing the Family resource centers is one example of these entities working together to provide critical resources to students and families.

|   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|----------|----------|

**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

"Overall goal: to increase the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals". Grant proposes to use balanced leadership program to support principal and administrator to employ behaviors and practices that lead to increase student achievement. The evaluation of teacher, administrators and the Superintendents is based upon work of the Regional Educational Laboratories that work with Eastern Kentucky University, University of Kentucky, Kentucky Dept. of Education. This objective approach will accelerate the identification of challenges and improvement in this area.

The goal of increasing the number of highly effective and effective teachers by 2-3% per year is reasonable when coupled with extensive professional development, coaching and accurate feedback provided through data analysis.

|  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>5</b> |
|--|----------|----------|

**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

Throughout the grant period each district has agreed to maintain key staffing patterns in each district. This includes a district coordinator, college/career readiness coordinator, and e-learning coordinator.

This proposal provides thorough plans that will support key initiatives beyond the life of the grant and has outlined them in detail. The plans indicate that all four districts will create a structure that establishes and maintains project components. State and federal funding allocations are defined and identified for continued funding; business and agency foundations support is outlined; local government support and sources for continued professional development

are identified. All these aspects are supported by a huge appendix of documents, such as organizational charts, budget summaries and letters of support from all partners.

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

|  | Available | Score     |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>Proposal clearly outlines all funding sources and their application to grant initiatives. Full descriptions and projections specify who will serve as the fiduciary agent and how funds will be allocated over the term of the grant. Allocations of grant funds are clearly delineated as one time or ongoing expenses.</p> <p>The scope of this project is extensive when considering every student and their family in four districts will be impacted by resources provided. The community at large will also benefit from resources created. They also have shown a strong commitment of resources to insure success of the grant proposal.</p>  |           |           |
| <b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>Applicant proposes to create a self-sustaining capacity beyond the four years of funding. The intent is to use the grant funding initiate and develop the project elements and establish a documented strategy for post grant funding that will serve as a model for other districts. Goals include establishing a professional development service learning center and conference programs; enhanced business and post-secondary programs, establishing a 501c3 Foundation. Grant outlines details of these ideas very clearly in the "Overall Sustainability" chart provided.</p> <p>Proposal outlines and provides assurance that community partners will provide critical support beyond the life of the grant. Evidence is provided in the letters of support and participation at district and consortium level planning/advisory committee functions. Applicant also provides a budget proposal for three years after the term of the grant.</p> |           |           |

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

|  | Available | Score     |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>Applicant has provided an extensive matrix of agencies and services that partner with the district in the consortium to contribute to a coherent and sustainable structure, providing systemic change that is rigorous and relevant which should result in improved academic and postsecondary results. Their contributions will also support the systemic change and cultural shifts proposed. Participation by these organizations in a number of past collaborations shows a successful record of positive community impact.</p> <p>The extensive advisory committee system proposed will allow for accurate assessment of progress and impediments and opportunity to develop resolutions. Open and transparent communication will enhance these efforts.</p> <p>Throughout the grant period each district has agreed to maintain key staffing patterns in each district. Includes district coordinator, college/career readiness coordinator, and e-learning coordinator.</p> |           |           |



**Absolute Priority 1**

|  | Available              | Score      |
|--|------------------------|------------|
| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b>   | <b>Met/Not<br/>Met</b> | <b>Met</b> |
| <p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The application proposes a consortium of four school districts which together will merge their resources to address critical student needs. As outlined in detail in the proposal all requirements of this grant are addressed. The applicant provides comprehensive plans to:</p> <p>Adopt standards/assessments that prepare students for college/career</p> <p>Build data systems measure student growth and success</p> <p>Recruiting and retaining effective teachers/principals</p> <p>Turning around lowest achieving schools</p> <p>The innovation and creativity used to satisfy these goals focuses and maximizes available resources to support student learning and success, and re-energize the educational system of this two county region. Monies provided by this grant would greatly deepen and accelerate realization of the proposed project's activities that include specific strategies for working with partner districts in address their specific needs and leveraging resources and coordinating activities across the region. Sustainability of project endeavors has also been outlined in detail and seems to be achievable.</p> |                        |            |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>210</b>             | <b>206</b> |



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0357KY-2 for Corbin Independent Board of Education

### A. Vision (40 total points)

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(A)(1) Score = 8 /10</p> <p>The Corbin Independent Board of Education (Corbin) is providing leadership to this multiple school district proposal, consisting of 4 rural school districts serving 11,406 students. Whitley County, McCreary County, Williamsburg Independent and Corbin Independent Schools have united to form the Southeastern Kentucky RTTT Consortium, an innovative model of collaboration that could become a best practice for other rural school districts across our nation.</p> <p>Corbin is proposing that the vision for the 4 core educational assurance areas is managed by a transition council to coordinate activities for all 4 school districts. The transition council members will consist of both secondary and post-secondary partners to ensure a smooth transition from high school to college and careers. This is of particular relevance in that each student will have an "individual graduation program" with mentor and support provided from community members to meet the individual learning needs. Their proposal also calls for technology capabilities to allow for one-to-one, anytime/anywhere computing so important in low socioeconomic, rural areas.</p> <p>Corbin's vision for a personalized learning environment includes the preparation of professional development plans for teachers to shift the culture from teacher-centered to student-centered that emphasizes competency based learning (performance based learning and assessments) using college and career readiness, and common core standards, the heart of their personalized learning initiative.</p> <p>Professional learning communities will be formed around content areas and grade levels, with close coordination for ongoing recruitment and development of teachers with local teacher education programs at local universities. This will enhance the recruitment and retention of top level teachers and administrators. What is not discussed is the type of PLC and training that will be organized to support the personalized learning environment initiative, such as how to integrate performance based assessments into all content areas that is aligned with each student's individual graduation program.</p> <p>What is missing is a comprehensive vision for how to personalize each individual graduation program based upon student interests, learning styles, strengths, and career aspirations. Additionally, specific mention of how Corbin's plan will deepen and accelerate learning.</p> <p>Corbin has a clear and accurate view of the college and career readiness problem in their geographic area, with only 8% graduation rate for adults 25 and older in one district, and 11.9% in another. The</p> |           |          |

consortium is equally or more concerned about high school graduation rates of 49.6% in one district. Clearly, a college and career readiness focus will enhance these statistics.

Corbin has an effective use of data to determine baseline academic achievement per school and goals during the grant implementation period and beyond. The primary measurement to demonstrate effectiveness of this grant is the ESEA Kentucky standardized tests for math and reading. Corbin is also aware of the significant achievement gaps that exist in numerous subgroups.

Overall this places Corbin in the bottom of the top range.

|  |           |          |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
|--|-----------|----------|

**(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(A)(2) Score = 8/10

Corbin has described the process by which schools will be selected to implement this grant. What is impressive is that not only schools with high overall ESEA standardized test scores will be included, but those where the achievement gaps are the largest. A complete list of schools is provided in the Appendix. It is clear that all 4 districts see that personalized learning is a key strategy to empower their students' future academic and career trajectories.

A strength of this proposal is that all 11,400 students in the consortium will be involved in their personalized learning environment plans. Further, the grade 4 low income math scores will increase from 78% proficient to 86% by the end of the grant period. Similarly, the third grade reading proficient percentages will increase from 76% to 84%, clearly indicating a focus upon subgroups.

Overall this places Corbin in the bottom of the top range.

|  |           |          |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
|--|-----------|----------|

**(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

(A)(3) Score = 8/10

What is prominent in the Corbin description of consortium wide reform and change is the use of student voice and agency to determine the personalized learning plans for each student, representing a best practice in this emerging body of work. Additionally, included are numerous measures of personal growth and learning such as; academic/cognitive and social, economic, and physical non-cognitive development. A method of personalizing the teaching and learning method, differentiated instruction is an important standardized methodology for all teachers to know and understand as a part of the professional development plan.

Additionally, a well thought through three phase plan is presented with key activities to be undertaken in each phase. Examples include: in phase one of their plan the consortium will facilitate a shared vision among key stakeholders throughout the districts to determine collective goals and buy-in. During phase

two personalized learning tool kits will be prepared and distributed to teacher leaders, and key assessments will be measured and reported during phase three of their plan.

What is missing is a plan on how to scale up the plan during the grant period and post grant, and emerging software and multi-media tools such as Khan Academy and additional teaching methods known as flipped classroom.

Overall this places Corbin in the bottom of the top range.

|  |           |          |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
|--|-----------|----------|

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

(A)(4) Score = 8/10

Corbin has identified graduation rates and number of high school graduates enrolling into higher education institutions as goals for this project, as well as reducing achievement gaps among subgroups by 10%.

Importantly, Corbin sees that changing seat time requirements to allow students to demonstrate mastery in subject areas as critical to their success when assisting students become college and career ready consistent with college and career standards.

Extensive charts are presented with specific academic achievement goals for each school and grade level by subject for grant period and post grant, demonstrating expert use of data for decision making especially when formulating the goals for this project.

What is missing from this analysis is a specific set of strategies that will impact the achievement gaps for each subgroup over and above a general discussion as assertion that by personalizing the instruction, or differentiating the approach, or understanding learning styles will accomplish the goals for each subgroup. For example, no mention of project based learning out in the local community taking advantage of the strong support from numerous institutions such as businesses, which would improve math scores, advance career readiness, and deepen the learning.

Overall this places Corbin at the bottom of the high range.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>13</b> |
| <b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br>(B)(1) Score = 13/15<br><br>Corbin has demonstrated a strong track record of improvement for students to close achievement gaps, and for low performing schools, and has established a foundation for further gains, including: |           |           |

1. Developmentally appropriate practices based upon student readiness
2. Qualitative reporting of performance data to student and parents on a daily basis
3. Flexible grouping based upon student learning needs
4. Extended school learning opportunities for remediation and mastery of skills
5. Created Family Resource Centers to break emotional and physical well-being barriers to learning
6. Implemented Youth Services Centers providing readiness skills to facilitate the transition from middle school to high school, resulting in reduced dropout rates. Additional benefits include: Referrals to health and social services; summer and part-time job development; Drug and alcohol abuse counseling; and, Family crisis and mental health counseling.
7. Reduced dropout rates by implementing alternative education and smaller group instruction, and flexible scheduling for work-based programs and teen parenting
8. Targeted assistance for low performing schools has resulted in two Tier 3, persistently low achieving schools to improve
9. Reassigning staff where better suited and developing staff professionally when needed

What is missing is hard data to quantify the achievement gains for improvements through these above listed strategies.

Further, Corbin has made effective use of open data format, Parent Portal System to allow access to each student's "electronic personal learning profile" for up to date reporting on progress and next learning goals.

What is missing is hard data as evidence of the effectiveness of the targeted assistance for low performing schools, as one example, or reduced dropout rates by implementing work-based programs, as a second example.

A particular strength of Corbin's previous program implementation is that much of their work in providing socio-emotional, mental and physical health services through resource centers establishes the type of foundation that is needed to create a personalized learning environment.

Overall this places Corbin in the middle of the high range.

**(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)**

**5**

**4**

**(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(B)(2) Score = 4/5

All four districts in this Corbin proposal utilized a Kentucky Department of Education required program for reporting school based data, MUNIS.

What is missing is transparency about the non-personnel expenditures as well as "school-level" salaries for teachers as required in criteria.

Overall this places Corbin at the bottom of the high range.

|  |           |          |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
| <p><b>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(B)(3) Score = 8/10</p> <p>Through Kentucky legislation common assessments to measure college and career readiness has significantly improved school district results by allowing for local school and/or district freedom to develop home grown approaches to achieving these measures. Of particular significance is the development of Family and Youth Resource Centers to provide whole child, socio-emotional support services through schooling.</p> <p>What is missing is the Corbin's use of seat time requirements to allow for more freedoms when developing project based learning, work based learning, among others to help demonstrate competencies required by common core in math, science, language arts. This proposal would be stronger if additional details were provided about their specific plans for eliminating seat time requirements and the nature of their relationship with Kentucky Department of Education.</p> |           |          |
| <b>(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |
| <p><b>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(B)(4) Score = 9/10</p> <p>Corbin has thoroughly engaged numerous stakeholders in the preparation of this proposal and commitment to support it through the grant period and beyond. Examples include: Mayors, local businesses, non-profit organizations, Superintendents, principals, teachers and even students. What is missing are letters of support from the local teachers' union representatives.</p> <p>A particular strength was the use of School-based Decision Making Councils made up of parents and community members to provide input into school improvement plans and in the formulation of this proposal.</p> <p>Overall this places Corbin at the top of the high range for this criterion.</p>  |           |          |
| <b>(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)</b>  | <b>5</b>  | <b>4</b> |
| <p><b>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(B)(5) Score = 4/5</p> <p>Corbin has demonstrated the use of data for identifying achievement gaps among their four districts, along with the need to close these gaps. Examples include identifying grade 4 math proficiency percentages for low income students, grade 3 reading proficiencies for low income students, and clearly stated goals for grant period and beyond. Additionally, their high quality plan includes three distinct phases with key activities in each.</p> <p>What is missing in their plan is identification of needs to close the gaps, such as new teaching and learning approaches like flipped classrooms, and specific teacher development approaches.</p>   |           |          |

Overall this places Corbin at the bottom of the high range.

### C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>  | <b>20</b> | <b>17</b> |
| <p><b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br/>(C)(1) Score = 17/20</p> <p>Corbin has proposed a high quality plan for transforming student learning through implementation of a personalized learning environment. The plan calls for significant use of analyzing student data captured from a variety of sources and then comparing this data with individualized student learning plans to determine the appropriate intervention and strategy.</p> <p>Corbin has presented a three phase plan with specific key activities that will guide their implementation. Of particular significance is the use of the National Academy Foundation model where students will be able to participate in college preparatory curricula within career themed academies. Each academy will provide students with two pathways; college bound and career. Further, the implementation of the Project Lead the Way curriculum model will further support the application of common core, college and career readiness standards in real-world contexts. The focus of PLTW is on STEM subjects and products where the university system will award college credits as a motivation to attend.</p> <p>What is missing is a thorough discussion about the use of flipped classroom, one-to-one computing, and hybrid technology solutions to personalizing the learning based upon personalized learning plans and self paced learning. This is of particular importance in that the highly respected online learning technology standards organization, iNACOL has offered a letter of support for this proposal and they have recently updated their standards to include personalization.</p> <p>Overall this places Corbin in the middle of the high range.</p> |           |           |
| <b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b>  | <b>20</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <p><b>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b><br/>(C)(2) Score = 15 /20</p> <p>Corbin has proposed a thorough, phased implementation plan, for example: “<b>Phase two</b> of Personalized Learning will consist of implementation and coaching, which involves creating the framework of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>? Consulting with participating schools, district administration and stakeholders on implementation;</li> <li>? Identifying and consulting with Personalized Learning Environment (PLE) Teacher Leaders;</li> <li>? Guiding the design of Personal Learning Plans and Toolkits for each PLE Teacher Leader;</li> </ul>   |           |           |

- ? Setting up a Community of Practice (COP) for the PLE Teacher Leaders;
- ? Coaching PLE Teacher Leaders to design model lessons and projects to match student needs;
- ? Provide reports about ongoing progress of the PLE coaching program.

A strength of phase two is the identification of personalized learning lead teachers and the design of toolkits for each. Additionally, establishing communities of practice for teacher leaders represents a teacher development best practice that has merit. Additionally, Strategy 4 requires "targeted interventions" for students who are struggling, high-needs. Transitions for students in the middle grades will take advantage of an innovative "bridge program" that will allow for expanded learning opportunities. Students will be identified using: Explore, Plan, and Aspire tests as well as ACT for college and career readiness.

What is missing from this analysis is the understanding of the student profile and use of when designing personalized learning. UDL as a body of work does indeed provide a multi-modal understanding; however, student aspirations and interests, and developmental stages and self knowledge are not discussed, and should be to satisfy this "teaching" criterion. The learning target for this project is college and career readiness but does not include developmental milestones such as competencies or personal growth through stages.

Overall this places Corbin at the bottom of the high range.

#### D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>12</b> |
| <p><b>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(D)(1) Score = 12/15</p> <p>Corbin proposes to manage the implementation of the personalized learning environment across all four districts through a management council made up of key school leadership representatives and members of the SBDM Council from each district. This structure will ensure consistent policy formulation and implementation of the plan.</p> <p>Of particular note and significance is the flexibility in allowing for competency based learning through a "flex-credit plan." In addition, extended learning opportunities using e-learning and anytime anywhere learning will provide for student directed learning environment.</p> <p>What is missing is a discussion on the instructional practices that will be made available to all learners especially students with disabilities and English Language Learners, and what policies and procedures are in place or will be put into action that will allow students to demonstrate mastery through competency based systems.</p> |           |           |



Overall this places Corbin in the bottom of the high range.

**(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)**

**10**

**8**

**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(D)(2) Score = 8/10

Corbin will rely upon the UDL approach to developing curricula for each student based upon their individualized learning needs. This approach adds a new level of lesson planning to accommodate for all students differences and those on a 504 plan. Further, their approach addresses all students; "Through Individual Education Programs (IEP), 504 plans, and the use of the Individual Graduation Plan (IGP), each student will have a customized pathway that leads to success toward college- and career-readiness. Involvement of each school district's **special education, English learner, and 504 directors** will help to coordinate services with the implementation of the personalized learning environment component and to **ensure adaptability and full access for all students.**"

This is an ambitious plan especially if consortium teachers need to learn common core, one-to-one computing, college and career readiness standards, project based learning, among other method and techniques proposed.

To support such an ambitious plan a more comprehensive professional development plan should be proposed

Overall this places Corbin at the bottom of the high range.

**E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)**

|   | Available | Score     |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>14</b> |
| <p><b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>(E)(1) Score = 14 /15</p> <p>Corbin has in place a formal strategic plan which allows for continuous improvement feedback and changes, so as to achieve stated goal through the use numerous assessments and data. Of particular importance and strength of this proposal is the use of outside evaluators to assess the progress of this project, including: University of Kentucky P20 Lab, Eastern Kentucky University, and iNACOL for technical progress, all are important component parts of the continuous improvement process. Further, the use of a Personalized Learning Coordinator is important for managing continuous improvement for the project plan period. The amount of funding dedicated to professional development is perhaps a little low given the extent of workshops and training that needs to be conducted at all levels of the district organization, teachers, technical staff, principals, among others.</p> <p>Another strength of this proposal are the goals for student achievement after the grant period. For example the percentage of special needs students applying for FASA in the post grant period is targeted at 90%.</p> |           |           |

Overall this places Corbin at the top of the high range.

|   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|----------|----------|

**(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

(E)(2) Score = 5/5

Corbin has in place a comprehensive project management and communication plan with frequent status updates involving numerous stakeholders, including: advisory board, consortium staff meetings, school based decision making councils, school board meetings, student advisory councils, public forums, media outlets, dedicated website, electronic newsletter, and printed materials.

The Corbin high quality plan details three specific phases with important activities in each phase. Of particular importance is the ongoing use of the School-based Decision Making Councils to provide avenues for continuous improvement.

Overall this places Corbin at the high end of the high range.

|   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>3</b> |
|---|----------|----------|

**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

(E)(3) Score = 3/5

Corbin has clear performance measures for major subgroups, including: "Performance measures for this project were chosen with careful consideration of the proposal requirements and the individual needs unique to the consortium as identified through gap analysis. The subgroups targeted by this consortium include low-income and special needs students, both of which represent substantial numbers of students in this application. (72% of the overall consortium population is low-income; 16% is special needs.)" including measures for: effective teacher, effective principal, academic, cognitive, non-cognitive, college and career readiness, and comprehensive evaluations for socio-emotional and physical health. Overall Corbin has met the required minimum of 12-14 performance measures.

Additionally, ambitious goals have been established for each subgroup, one example is for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade special needs students reaching reading proficiency by the 2014-15 school year is 91%, with a 2011-12 baseline of 81%.

What is missing are performance measures for the soft skills often associated with non-cognitive development, such as socio-emotional well-being, and associated goals.

Overall this places Corbin in the middle of the middle range.

|  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>4</b> |
|--|----------|----------|

**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

(E)(4) Score = 4/5

Corbin has established clear use for grant funds that are consistent with successful implementation, management, and assessment for the grant period and beyond. What is missing is a more complete analysis of the professional development training required for all teachers.

Overall this places Corbin in the low end of the high range.

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |
| <b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br>(F)(1) Score = 9 /10<br><br>The Corbin budget allocation for the project is appropriate, the reliance upon Federal Title I, II, III, local foundation funds, and Kentucky SEEK funds for post grant period sustainability is of concern if they do not materialize.<br><br>Grant funds to be used for one time investment are primarily for technology and personnel. Whereas ongoing funding will consist of numerous sources which are not certain at this time.<br><br>Overall this places Corbin at the high end of the high range. |           |          |
| <b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |
| <b>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b><br>(F)(2) Score = 9/10<br><br>Corbin has proposed post grant period funding sources to include: Federal Title I, II, III, local foundation funds, Kentucky SEEK funds, and Kentucky State funding, this is of concern since funding for Kentucky schools was cut \$50 million last fiscal year. What is missing is a sustainable technology replacement plan for one to one computing capabilities.<br><br>Overall this places Corbin in the high end of the high range.   |           |          |

## Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b><br>Competitive Preference Priority Score = 8/10 |           |          |

Corbin has proposed a significant number of key partnerships, all of which will serve to personalize the learning for each student through increased project based learning, project lead the way, family and youth services agencies, business community, higher education institutions, among others, and create the capacity for a personalized learning environment. Further, the level of integration among the local institutions with the schools is very strong and could serve as a model for other districts nationwide as out of school learning activities to demonstrate competencies becomes the norm.

What is missing is an approach providing additional student and family supports to schools that address the social, emotional, or behavioral needs of the participating students (as defined in this notice), giving highest priority to students in participating schools with high-need students (as defined in this notice). To meet this priority, an applicant's proposal does not need to be comprehensive and may provide student and family supports that focus on a subset of these needs.

This places the Corbin at the low end of the high range.

## Absolute Priority 1

|   | Available          | Score      |
|---|--------------------|------------|
| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b>  | <b>Met/Not Met</b> | <b>Met</b> |
| <p><b>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The Corbin Independent Board of Education (Corbin) is providing leadership to this multiple school district proposal, consisting of 4 rural school districts serving 11,406 students. Whitley County, McCreary County, Williamsburg Independent and Corbin Independent Schools have united to form the Southeastern Kentucky RTTT Consortium, an innovative model of collaboration that could become a best practice for other rural school districts across our nation. The grant request is \$29,999.999 million.</p> <p>Corbin is proposing that the vision for the 4 core educational assurance areas is managed by a Transition Council to coordinate activities for all 4 school districts. The transition council members will consist of both secondary and post-secondary partners to ensure a smooth transition from high school to college and careers. This is of particular relevance in that each student will have an "individual graduation program" with mentor and support provided from community members to meet the individual learning needs. Their proposal also calls for technology capabilities to allow for one-to-one, anytime/anywhere computing so important in low socioeconomic, rural areas.</p> <p>Corbin's vision for a personalized learning environment includes the preparation of professional development plans for teachers to shift the culture from teacher-centered to student-centered that emphasizes competency based learning (performance based learning and assessments) using college and career readiness, and common core standards, the heart of their personalized learning initiative.</p> <p>Corbin has demonstrated a strong track record of improvement for students to close achievement gaps, and for low performing schools, and has established a foundation for further gains, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developmentally appropriate practices based upon student readiness</li> <li>2. Qualitative reporting of performance data to student and parents on a daily basis</li> <li>3. Flexible grouping based upon student learning needs</li> <li>4. Extended school learning opportunities for remediation and mastery of skills</li> <li>5. Created Family Resource Centers to break emotional and physical well-being barriers to learning</li> <li>6. Implemented Youth Services Centers providing readiness skills to facilitate the transition from middle school to high school, resulting in reduced dropout rates. Additional benefits include:</li> </ol> |                    |            |

Referrals to health and social services; summer and part-time job development; Drug and alcohol abuse counseling; and, Family crisis and mental health counseling.

7. Reduced dropout rates by implementing alternative education and smaller group instruction, and flexible scheduling for work-based programs and teen parenting
8. Targeted assistance for low performing schools has resulted in two Tier 3, Persistently low achieving schools to improve
9. Reassigning staff where better suited and developing staff professionally when needed

Of particular significance is the use of the National Academy Foundation model where students will be able to participate in college preparatory curricula within career themed academies. Each academy will provide students with two pathways; college bound and career. Further, the implementation of the Project Lead the Way curriculum model will further support the application of common core, college and career readiness standards in real-world contexts. The focus of PLTW is on STEM subjects and products where the university system will award college credits as a motivation to attend.

Corbin has proposed a thorough, phased implementation plan, for example: “**Phase two** of Personalized Learning will consist of implementation and coaching, which involves creating the framework of the following:

- ? Consulting with participating schools, district administration and stakeholders on implementation;
- ? Identifying and consulting with Personalized Learning Environment (PLE) Teacher Leaders;
- ? Guiding the design of Personal Learning Plans and Toolkits for each PLE Teacher Leader;
- ? Setting up a Community of Practice (COP) for the PLE Teacher Leaders;
- ? Coaching PLE Teacher Leaders to design model lessons and projects to match student needs;
- ? Provide reports about ongoing progress of the PLE coaching program.

A strength of phase two is the identification of personalized learning lead teachers and the design of toolkits for each. Additionally, establishing communities of practice for teacher leaders represents a teacher development best practice that has merit.

Corbin has proposed a significant number of key partnerships, all of which will serve to personalize the learning for each student through increased project based learning, project lead the way, family and youth services agencies, business community, higher education institutions, among others, and create the capacity for a personalized learning environment. Further, the level of integration among the local institutions with the schools is very strong and could serve as a model for other districts nationwide as out of school learning activities to demonstrate competencies becomes the norm.

There is significant positive energy and support for this project in the Southeastern Kentucky region. The student demographics and rural geography make this a worthwhile investment to serve as scalable model.

|       |     |     |
|-------|-----|-----|
| Total | 210 | 174 |
|-------|-----|-----|



# Race to the Top - District

## Technical Review Form

Application #0357KY-3 for Corbin Independent Board of Education

### A. Vision (40 total points)

|  | Available | Score    |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The proposal references personalized learning in and out of school in order to achieve student learning. These emphases are in line with the core assurance areas.</p> <p>The proposal references individualized learning plans as a way to meet the needs of individuals using data to result in increased achievement. This is in line with the goal of personalize learning environments.</p> <p>The consortium plans to implement common, standardized assessments three times a year and to implement a larger number of performance assessments in order to provide high-quality data.</p> <p>The proposal references a streamlined hiring process as a way to recruit and retain high-quality educators. However, it's not clear how this would work. The proposal also references support for struggling teachers, but mentions no system to remove ineffective educators.</p> <p>Very little information is provided regarding turning around the lowest performing schools.</p>   |           |          |
| <b>(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>The proposal indicates that all schools in the four LEAs will participate in the proposed reforms. This indicates that scale-up is not an issue. The proposal also suggests that each LEA meets the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>The consortium suggests that the reason all schools will participate is that they all have relatively low parental education levels (approx. 25 - 50% high school graduation), but also have similar levels of prior success with improvements (implementation of professional learning communities, Project Lead the Way, etc.). Data are presented to support this which rationalizes the sample of participants.</p> <p>The consortium was also brought together based on consistent and similar achievement gaps across all LEAs though the actual sizes of the gaps are not referenced.</p> <p>Demographics are provided for student enrollment by school, including the numbers of educators and numbers of high-need students.</p> <p>Overall the information on the impetus for the consortium and the selection of schools is reasonable and logical.</p> |           |          |
| <b>(A)(3) LEA-wide reform &amp; change (10 points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <p><b>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</b></p> <p>Many of the themes presented in this section connect well to the absolute priority of personalized learning environments (e.g., personalize learning, data-based instruction, flexible learning environments, student choice and empowerment, etc.).</p>  |           |          |

Although the proposal does not include a high-quality plan for scale up, this is not a negative since all schools in each LEA will participate in grant activities.

Although a logic model is presented which includes educational / reform inputs, outputs, and outcomes, it does not include all of the components of a high-quality plan (e.g., responsible parties and details for implementation).

|  |           |          |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b> |
|--|-----------|----------|

**(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The general emphasis / goal of personalized learning / data-based instruction is likely to result in the increased student achievement referenced as a main goal.

Goals stated include reading and math proficiency rates of 90%, a 10% decrease in achievement gaps, increased freshmen graduation rates, increased college enrollment (3% annually), and an increase in the number of graduates who are career and college ready.

The goals regarding highly-effective and effective teachers and principals are reasonable (moving from 14% - 25% and 18% - 75% respectively).

Each indicator across the various subjects and subgroups points to consistent growth as being expected across all years of the grant period. This steady but consistent growth is in line with grant priorities.

## B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)</b>   | <b>15</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <b>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>The proposal references several general reforms (e.g., "created extended school learning opportunities, improved intervention strategies" etc.) as providing evidence under each of the three categories (student learning, lowest-achieving schools, making performance data available). However, few details are provided.</p> <p>General interventions are presented as evidence of reforming the lowest-performing schools (e.g., providing highly-skilled educators to those schools) but few details are provided nor are any statistics or evidence showing improvement occurred.</p> <p>The proposal indicates that a Parent Portal System is in place to allow parents access to student data. No information is provided regarding data access, use, and training for educators.</p> |           |          |
| <b>(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)</b>   | <b>5</b>  | <b>4</b> |
| <b>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>The proposal references government open-data reporting as evidence of consortium commitment to transparency. However, reporting salaries to the State is not the same as making salaries and expenditures open to the public. A website is referenced (public access) as providing individual salaries.</p> <p>Each LEA contracts with an independent firm to engage in a yearly audit demonstrating commitment to transparency. Both these and School Board minutes regarding expenditures are publicly available.</p>  |           |          |
| <b>(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b> |

**(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The proposal references a strong degree of autonomy and individual decision-making on the part of LEAs in the State.

The proposal also references Senate Bill 1 which delegates curriculum authority to the LEAs.

The proposal references several previous efforts across the state (such as increased public confidence in public schools by the public) as evidence of autonomy. However, this does not provide evidence that the Consortium has the authority to implement the plans included in the proposal. There is no information explaining how the Consortium has the authority to implement its specific plans for reform.

**(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)****10****10****(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The proposal references a comprehensive system that was used to develop and receive feedback on the proposal including meetings among the four LEAs as well as advertising for open meetings through various media outlets.

Each of the four Districts included letters demonstrating teacher support in excess of 75%. This indicates strong teacher support for the proposal.

School principals were directly involved in project planning through a council made up of all school principals. This further demonstrates evidence of strong stakeholder support.

A wide range of letters of support are included from various staff at school buildings including technology coordinators, directors of instruction, and parents.

**(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)****5****4****(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:**

The proposal references day-long data evaluation and planning professional development days to be used in Fall and Spring to plan instruction for the coming year. A wide range of data will be discussed at these meetings (e.g., ACT, and other standardized test data, attendance rates, status of Response to Intervention implementation, etc.). These data will be used to identify barriers to implementation and to revise program plans. These meetings will also have their minutes posted online for the public.

The information presented represents a structure to a high-quality plan. However, some components (e.g., progress monitoring goals, expected outcomes, responsible parties, etc) are not provided.

**C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)**

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(C)(1) Learning (20 points)</b>  | <b>20</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <b>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b>  |           |          |
| <p>The proposal references the use of data-based, research-based curricular planning as the primary path to personalized learning environments. The proposal also references a focus on performance assessment and "anytime / anywhere" flexibility for where and how learning will take place. No specifics are provided regarding how students will see the connection between content and their personal goals.</p> <p>The proposal references new State Common Core standards as evidence that student learning will be linked with college and career-readiness. However, specifics on how this linkage will occur are not provided.</p> |           |          |



The proposal references the use of student-selected, interest-based academies as the format through which students will be able to pursue topics of interest on their paths toward college or careers. No information regarding the implementation or structure of these academies is referenced.

Many strategies or general ideas are provided (such as academic and career advising, career readiness pathways, etc). However, the information provided with regard to each of these ideas is limited. No specifics are provided regarding how they will be implemented, what will happen, what outcomes will be measured, and who will be responsible.

No information is provided regarding informing students of the resources available to them.

High-need students are referenced, but no specifics are provided regarding particular interventions.

Overall the content provided in this section does not represent a high-quality plan. As referenced above, the details of implementation are missing.

|  |           |          |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>8</b> |
|--|-----------|----------|

**(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

Statements are made such as "teachers will customize lessons based on individual needs" but little information regarding this training is provided. This is continued throughout the section with references to "guiding learners is setting goals" and "create an environment where it is safe to take chances". However, a plan for how these goals will be accomplished is not provided.

A table of "components" and "addressing elements" is provided, but these items are very general and do not describe how or what training will take place to implement PLEs.

The consortium's plan for implementation consists of several phases. However, the items or action steps included under each phase are very general and do not indicate what specific training or action will take place (e.g., Develop a strategic plan with metrics, set up a community of practice, etc).

Information is provided regarding additional learning resources that will be available to students and teachers (online learning systems, thematic lessons, etc). Training for educators regarding a thematic learning program is also discussed but not in great detail.

The evaluation system referenced for teachers and principals does not reference student growth as required for this grant. No information is provided regarding the details of this system nor how data will be collected and used for instructional improvement or school reform. No plan is provided as a process under which more students will be taught by highly-effective teachers or principals.

## **D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)**

|  | Available | Score    |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>7</b> |

**(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:**

The proposal references School-Based Decision Councils as evidence of school and LEA flexibility to implement the proposed reforms. However, no information is provided regarding how this indicates flexibility or how the central office is structured in a way to promote flexibility.

The proposal includes numerous letters of support and participation from a wide range of stakeholders. However, this does not address flexibility, or the freedom to implement the proposed project. the content of these letters makes it clear that there is widespread support for the project within and outside of the LEAs.

The proposal suggests that individual LEAs have sufficient control to implement the proposed program, but few specifics are provided.

"Flex Plans" are referenced as a means through which students can earn credit through mastery. However, the details of such plans are not included in the proposal.

The proposal references few ways (e.g., AP tests) through which students will be able to demonstrate mastery. No discussion is included of multiple or diverse measures. Methods for adaptability are limited to a reference to special education teachers and 504 plan directors. Technology is referenced as a way through which students will be able to demonstrate masters and have access to learning opportunities. However, the mechanism of this system is unclear.

Overall it is not clear that the Consortium has a plan to implement policies to facilitate the reform regarding personalized learning environments.

|   |           |          |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|-----------|----------|

**(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The proposal includes references to cooperation with media outlets (including letters of support) as a means to assure that students and parents are aware of resources. The proposal also references volunteer and online technology support systems that will assure educators, parents, and teachers all have access to appropriate resources. The actual process through which this will happen is unclear.

The proposal references an open data system that will be used to allow parents and students access to their data. However, little information is provided regarding how this will happen and how teachers and students will be trained in the use of these systems. The proposal suggests that this data system will be linked with other data systems and financial systems throughout the state.

## E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)</b>  | <b>15</b> | <b>8</b> |
| <b>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>The proposal references partnering with a university as well as an outside contractor in order to provide evaluation services. A general structure is then provided (ten steps) for how the program will self-evaluate and adjust. However, the information provided is not sufficiently detailed in order to make up a plan for continuous improvement. Timelines and action steps are missing.</p> <p>The proposal does reference certain assessments (ACT, content area tests, etc) and how often they will be administered. However, nothing is included regarding how these assessments will be used to revise program plans. There is also no information regarding the timeliness of these assessments and how long it will take for results to be used for revision.</p> <p>The proposal states that data will be posted on the consortium website.</p> <p>Overall a general structure of assessments to be used is provided, but the process for how this information will be used for revision and improvement is not clear.</p> |           |          |
| <b>(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)</b>   | <b>5</b>  | <b>4</b> |
| <b>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</b>  |           |          |

The proposal referenced a large number of advisory groups and groups of internal and external stakeholders, (e.g., advisory board, student advisory group, public forums) as well as how often they will meet as evidence of engagement.

Information regarding how feedback will be solicited or the detailed structure of these groups and their purposes / meetings is not provided.

|   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>3</b> |
|---|----------|----------|

**(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:**

The proposal states that measures were chosen based on State standards for assessments. This is not explained.

The proposal mentions that all goals meet or exceed those set by the State.

Data were not presented for some subgroups (e.g., low income and special needs) regarding high-effective teachers. The goal for highly effective (moving from 14 - 25%) is not ambitious. The goal of moving from 18% to 75% effective educators is overly ambitious and will be hard to achieve.

The proposal presents the grade 3 reading test scores for low-income students as going down over the period of the grant. This is not an ambitious goal. All other reading and math goals with regard to achievement are reasonable and achievable.

The proposal references the term "local norm" in several places throughout this section. However, its use in the outcome measures' table is confusing and indicates a misunderstanding of the term (what "local" means is not clear).

The use of behavior referrals as an indicator of social-emotional health and attendance as a measure of overall health is not ambitious.

Information regarding the timeliness of the data provided by the proposed measures is not provided nor is information regarding changes to the measures if needed.

|  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| <b>(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>1</b> |
|--|----------|----------|

**(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:**

The information provided in section E4 does not address project evaluation. There is no information on how the consortium will evaluate its professional development, use of technology, or personalized learning system overall.

## F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

|   | Available | Score    |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)</b>  | <b>10</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <b>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>The proposal makes reference to several local sources of funding (e.g., Title I, local taxes, state funds) but does not specify for what purpose these funds will be used. Some details are provided regarding safe school funds and alternative programming funds from the State.</p> <p>The proposal references that all LEAs will provide space and facilities for grant programs.</p> <p>A variety of funding sources are mentioned (e.g., local businesses, foundations, etc.) but what funds they will contribute and how the funds will be used is not clear.</p> |           |          |

One-time purchases will focus on technology and professional development. The connection between these and long-term sustainability and PLEs is not described.

Overall general information is provided regarding funding sources, but details regarding amounts and purposes (purchases) are not described.

|   |           |          |
|---|-----------|----------|
| <b>(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> |
|---|-----------|----------|

**(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:**

The proposal references technology donations as well as LEA support as a means through which the technology component will be maintained. This does not seem a reasonable way to sustain the proposed project in its entirety.

The proposal references the development of a professional development center to maintain needed teacher training. This is a reasonable expectation / method to maintain the program.

In general, a non-profit will be established to raise funds in order to continue to support the reforms. This is likely to contribute funds to support the program.

A general plan is provided indicating expected post-grant expenses (e.g., salaries, materials, etc) as well as expected sources of revenue.

### Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

|  | Available | Score    |
|--|-----------|----------|
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)</b>   | <b>10</b> | <b>4</b> |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</b><br><p>The proposal included a chart listing a number of schools, businesses, and community groups that are part of a larger partnership formed to assist in reform efforts. However, most of these groups are participating schools, universities, or parent groups that are part of the participating schools. The partnership does not appear to be diverse beyond traditional educational circles.</p> <p>The proposal references a partnership with the Family Resource and Youth Services Center as a means through which social-emotional services and counseling will be provided including child-care and after school care.</p> <p>The assessments of needs as well as indicators of success are the same as were targeted for the general program. It's not clear how these relate specifically to the partnership.</p> <p>The goals for the partnership do not appear to be different from those for the program in general. Throughout this section it's not clear what the partnership will provide or do beyond stay in contact with the LEAs and offer the kinds of support the various organizations already provide.</p> <p>The proposal references the partnership and the School Decision Councils as evidence of the decision-making process. Little detail is provided.</p> |           |          |

### Absolute Priority 1

|                            | Available          | Score          |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b> | <b>Met/Not Met</b> | <b>Not Met</b> |

**Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:**

This proposal makes several references to data-based decision making and personalized learning environments. However, few specifics were provided in the proposal regarding how such initiatives would be accomplished. Technology and the use of flexible learning environments (anytime / anywhere) were referenced, but no specifics were provided regarding what would happen in the districts to facilitate this or what would be done to provide this reform.

The program appears to focus on technology and professional development, but the connection between these initiatives and student outcomes was not made explicit. The items for which funds will be spent were clear, but a program or schedule regarding the intervention to take place and how that intervention will influence student learning is not clear.

|              |            |            |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>210</b> | <b>124</b> |
|--------------|------------|------------|

